



**Lithuanian University of Health Sciences
Veterinary Academy
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine**



**RE-VISITATION
SELF EVALUATION REPORT**

Based on the Budapest Standard Operating Procedure, 2012

**European Association of Establishments
for Veterinary Education**

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INTRODUCTION

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In October 2012 the EAEVE visitation of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FVM), Veterinary Academy (VA), Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU), Kaunas, Lithuania took place and five major deficiencies were detected.

After the re-visitation on 27-29 April 2015 the EAEVE expert group detected one not eliminated major deficiency: **The requirements regarding Physical Facilities in general and with respect to safety and biosecurity procedures, as laid down in Annex I of the SOP, are still not met.**

ECOVE has confirmed CONDITIONAL APPROVAL status of FVM (decision of 19th November 2015) (Annex 1).

The EAEVE experts have indicated the defects to overcome and made some suggestions in order to fulfil the ESEVT standards:

1. The Faculty must implement a biosecurity and biosafety SOP for the Establishment as a whole, including the Small and Large Animal Clinics.

2. The team strongly recommends creating a Committee on Biosecurity and Biosafety at Faculty level and appointing some staff from the Department of Infectious Diseases or from the Institute of Microbiology and Virology to audit and monitor the correct implementation of the SOP.

3. Missing a lavatory in the entrance of the Isolation Unit for small animals.

4. No equipment to wash and disinfect the hands in the Large Animals Isolation Unit.

5. The system to transport the patients to Surgery through the stairs is far from being appropriate for the patient and staff welfare and wellbeing.

6. The Small and Large Animal Isolation Units that are not appropriate for the purpose: the floor and doors are wooden made so good cleaning and disinfection is almost impossible.

7. For the Large Animal Isolation Unit there is an open, wooden scaffolding for the roof with no air negative pressure, absolutely not appropriate to secure the hospitalization of patients with infectious diseases.

8. The team strongly suggests developing a clothing code on the SOP for biosecurity and biosafety for the staff and the students; to ensure that the preventive measures are correct the FVM should facilitate the clothes and boots for the students and should be in charge of the periodic cleaning and disinfection of this equipment at Faculty level.

9. Even when the students have information of vaccination and day-one skills in the intranet the team strongly recommends the VFK to ensure that all students know this important information by personal communication in the first year, making them to sign a registration form after reading and comprehending the information.

10. There is not a verification of the fulfilment of all Day-One Skills. To guarantee that, the team strongly suggest to design a logbook with a listing of all Day-One Skills (Annex IV of EAEVE SOP) and the signature of the practitioner and/or teacher responsible on the verification of the appropriate performance for each task.

11. The team strongly suggest to allocate a major part of the new building for Experimental animals to host the Small Animal Clinic.

I. MEASURES TAKEN TO ELIMINATE OF THE MAJOR DEFICIENCY:

The requirements regarding physical facilities in general and with respect to safety and biosecurity procedures, are still not met

1. The Faculty must implement a biosafety and biosecurity SOP for the Establishment as a whole, including the Small and Large Animal Clinics

1.1. In order to implement biosecurity and biosafety Standard Operating Procedures (further Biosecurity SOP) at FVM a working group for preparation of Biosecurity SOP was set up by the Dean of the FVM in 2015. The working group had to evaluate of present situation and to prepare guidelines for SOP development. The group members were included according to their competency from all of the FVM departments: Department of Veterinary Pathobiology (former Department of Infectious Diseases), dr. L. Kriaučeliūnas Small Animal Clinic (hereafter Small Animal Clinic), Large Animal Clinic, Institute of Microbiology and Virology, Department of Food Safety and Quality, Department of Anatomy and Physiology.

1.2. After the working group accomplished its work the Biosecurity and Biosafety Committee of FVM (further Biosecurity Committee) has been established by Rectors order in 2017 (order No. V-57, 2017 01 19) (Annex 2). The main task of the Committee was to prepare Biosecurity and Biosafety SOP for the FVM and later monitor and audit its implementation.

1.3. The Biosecurity SOP was discussed with academic staff and veterinary surgeons of the FVM and approved by Council of FVM in September 2017 (Annex 3).

1.4. For Biosecurity and Biosafety SOP implementation responsible persons were assigned in every Unit of the Faculty. They were responsible for coordinating implementation of biosecurity and biosafety in corresponding units and for communication with the Biosecurity Committee.

1.5. The responsible staff in the FVM units implemented Biosecurity and Biosafety SOP. The necessary funding for the implementation was reported to the Dean and then foreseen in the FVM budget for the next year. Before, the funds from reserve budget of FVM were used for the implementation of biosecurity.

1.6. Since 2018, staff of FVM has to make signed commitment to read and to follow the requirements and procedures of the Biosecurity SOP. This procedure is compulsory for all staff of FVM, new employees have to sign the commitment when signing their contract for a job.

1.7. In order to ensure gradual development and to stimulate biosecurity culture among students the Curriculum of Veterinary Medicine was adjusted with theoretical and practical elements that are combined to gradually provide students with understanding of the role of biosecurity in the study process, clinical work and veterinary profession. The relevant elements were introduced in numerous subjects from the first to the sixth study year. An introduction on biosecurity is already given for the 1st year students during the introductory study "Introduction to studies and information technology". Anatomy is the subject where students meet biosecurity in practice. Theoretical part is presented during lectures with slide presentations while specific details on biosecurity and work safety for each department/clinic are given during the practical work at the beginning of every relevant study subject. Before the practical work of every study subject students must confirm with a signature that they have been introduced and understood work safety, biosecurity and biosafety requirements. The repetition of the biosecurity topics is creating durable changes in student behaviour and a culture of biosafety.

During the second year of studies biosecurity teaching is further continued in subjects of Veterinary Hygiene and Animal Welfare and Veterinary Microbiology. And again, students have introduction to biosecurity rules at every department and clinical unit were applicable and confirms it by signing in biosecurity journals.

During the third study year biosecurity teaching is continued in subjects of Veterinary Virology with emphasis on viral diseases and Veterinary Epidemiology where disease prevention, control and eradication is thought.

The fourth-year students gain specific biosecurity knowledge applied for different animal species, production systems and veterinary practice while studying Preventive veterinary medicine and subjects thought in both Small and Large Animal Clinics.

The fifth-year students further develop biosecurity skills and knowledge during clinical subjects, rotations in Small and Large Animal Clinics, visits to various farms and during extra-mural practice. During the fifth and the last study year attention is also paid for biosecurity and hygiene issues during Food production processes and at slaughterhouses. A continuous assessment of biosecurity knowledge and skills

is carried out by providing biosecurity specific questions during evaluation of each study subject and constant evaluation during practical work at laboratories, clinics or other relevant environments.

1.8. Hazardous and infectious waste removal is coordinated by Occupational Safety and Health Service of LSMU. The service is responsible for making contracts with certified waste handlers (presently UAB Toksika). Waste management at FVM is done according to Biosecurity SOP (Annex 3, page 10, point 1.2.8)

1.9. The Faculty follows requirements of Lithuanian legal acts regulating use and disposal of waste of animal origin. At the FVM disposal of waste of animal origin is done through the Centre of Pathology and is in accordance with Biosafety requirements. There is the contract No P17-514 (2017-11-17) with certified company UAB Rietavas veterinarinė sanitarija, which provides service for proper disposal and utilization of biological waste from Veterinary Academy.

2. The team strongly recommends creating a Committee on Biosecurity and Biosafety at Faculty level and appointing some staff from the Department of Infectious Diseases or from the Institute of Microbiology & Virology to audit and monitor the correct implementation of the SOP

2.1. On the Dean's advice and by the order of the Rector of the LSMU the Committee on Biosecurity and Biosafety at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Academy of LSMU has been created in January 2017 (Annex 2). The Committee is composed of 5 qualified members from Department of Veterinary Pathobiology, Institute of Microbiology and Virology and representative of Occupational Safety and Health Service at LSMU.

2.2. For operative solution of issues related with biosecurity and biosafety, an e-mail address va.biosauga@lsmuni.lt was created for FVM staff, students and responsible persons. Any person, who has any suggestion or complain regarding biosecurity issues at the Faculty or has questions, can straight away address the Biosecurity Committee.

2.3. The main tasks of the Biosecurity Committee are:

- Constant updating of the Biosecurity and Biosafety SOP;
- Supervision and audit of biosecurity and biosafety requirements at FVM;
- Collaboration with Study Programme Committee of Veterinary Medicine on proper incorporation of biosecurity in the syllabus;
- Assist in training of students and staff at FVM regarding biosecurity and biosafety;
- Shaping mindset of the community of FVM and not only but also all Veterinary Academy regarding biosecurity and biosafety;
- Establishing action plans in case of crisis.

2.4. In order to have an outside critical view on biosecurity at FVM the Lithuanian State Food and Veterinary Service has been asked to appoint an expert to perform an external audit of biosecurity and biosafety at the FVM. Deputy Chief veterinary officer of Kaunas State Food and Veterinary Service has been appointed as the external auditor.

3. The system to transport the patients to Surgery through the stairs is far from being appropriate for the patient and staff welfare and wellbeing

In the Small Animal Clinic an elevator has been installed (Annex 4) to facilitate proper movement of animals from the ground floor to the examination or surgical rooms which are situated in the first floor. This improvement is saving patients of the Clinic from additional stress and also contributes to a better work safety in the unit.

4. Missing a lavatory in the entrance of the Isolation Unit for Small Animals Clinic

Isolation unit of Small Animal Clinic was supplied with the necessary equipment to secure proper operation of this unit. The isolation unit has been installed with shower, hand wash sink, hands disinfection equipment, cabinet for clothes and instrument storage (Annex 5).

5. No equipment to wash and disinfect the hands in the Large Animals Isolation Unit

The isolation unit has been moved to a new building (for more detail description see item 6 below). There is equipment to wash and disinfect hands in the unit. Also, culture to sanitize hands is encouraged with numerous hand disinfection equipment throughout the Large Animal Clinic (Annex 6).

6. The Small and Large Animal Isolation Units that are not appropriate for the purpose: the floor and doors are wooden made so good cleaning and disinfection is almost impossible

6.1. The isolation unit of the Large Animal Clinic has been moved to a new building which is equipped with proper animal keeping and preparation rooms. Floor and doors are suitable for washing and disinfection (Annex 6). All necessary tools to implement biosecurity requirements are on place: hand washing and disinfection equipment, footmats, dedicated space for footwears and clothes change, cupboards to store dedicated medicine and veterinary equipment, etc.

6.2. Since 2015 in the Large Animal Clinic roof, heating system, clinical lecture theatre, riding hall and shower room of horses has been renovated. Ventilation system and a proper horse shower have been installed. Animal barns were also reconstructed to meet biosecurity and animal welfare requirements. The Large Animal Clinic (1819 m²) belongs to cultural heritage of Lithuania, therefore its renovation has very strict requirements.

6.3. Control of human movement into and within the Clinic was improved by installing additional signs, doors, equipping doors with electronic lock controls or/and other physical barriers.

6.4. In the Small Animal Clinic the necessary changes were made: installed washable plastic doors and windows, ventilation with Hepa filters, footwear disinfection mats, also culture to sanitize hands is encouraged with numerous hand disinfection equipment throughout the Clinic.

7. For the Large Animal Isolation Unit there is an open, wooden scaffolding for the roof with no air negative pressure, absolutely not appropriate to secure the hospitalization of patients with infectious diseases

The isolation unit has been moved to the new building with adequate infrastructure and equipment, which are described above (pictures provided in Annex 6)

8. The team strongly suggests developing a clothing code on the SOP for biosecurity and biosafety for the staff and the students; to ensure that the preventive measures are correct the FVM should facilitate the clothes and boots for the students and should be in charge of the periodic cleaning and disinfection of this equipment at Faculty level

8.1. The new dressing code for students and personnel has been developed in order to improve biosecurity implementation at the FVM. The dressing codes are described in Biosecurity SOP (Annex 3, page 7, item 1.2.3.).

8.2. Floor marking lines were introduced in order to secure proper biosecurity in different parts of the clinical departments.

8.3. At a Faculty level there was boot washing and disinfection equipment purchased and installed for use of students and personnel, as well as clinic dedicated laundry facilities installed (Annex 7).

8.4. At Large Animal Clinic there are 100 pairs of rubber boots for use of students when going to external sites for practical training. The boots were bought from the Faculty budget.

9. Even when the students have information of vaccination and day-one skills in the intranet the team strongly recommends the FVM to ensure that all students know this important information by personal communication in the first year, making them to sign a registration form after reading and comprehending the information

9.1. At the Faculty students sign letters of conversance about the possibilities of vaccination against rabies and tetanus. The signed letters are stored in the Dean's office. All FVM students are repeatedly informed through the First Class system of LSMU about the possibilities of vaccination against rabies and tetanus and this information is provided twice a year before the beginning of each semester. In the high-risk premises

(e.g. in the Centre of Pathology, Large and Small Animal Clinics, etc.), the information is additionally communicated to students by academic staff orally and through posting.

9.2. Since 2013, all VM students have been annually insured against accidents during their studies. The insurance is valid for students during lectures, laboratory work and practice as well as for direct way from residence place in the state of learning (practice) to lectures, laboratory work and practice place and back to the place of residence. The Dean informs students about insurance policy orally and by First Class system of LSMU.

9.3. All students have the right to choose the medical institution and can receive medical treatment free of charge.

II. MEASURES TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERTS

10. To guarantee verification of the fulfilment of all day-one skills, the team strongly suggest to design a logbook with a listing of all Day-1 skills (Annex IV of EAEVE SOP) and the signature of the practitioner and /or teacher responsible on the verification of the appropriate performance for each task.

10.1. Following the suggestion, the personal Logbook (Annex 8) for monitoring development of Day-one skills has been completely updated and incorporated in the study process. Every student fills a personal Logbook of achieved clinical competences beginning with the 3rd year of the studies. Students' performance regarding each task and acquired skills are assessed daily by teaching staff. The procedures of filling the Logbook and the assessment design for acquired competences are specified in „Procedure of formation of Practical Skills of the Student in the Study Programme of VM“ (2014-08-28 No 13. Amendments: 2018-06-29, No 45). The teaching staff evaluate student's acquired skills and verifies it by signature. At the end of every academic year (3rd, 4th and 5th), students perform reflective analysis of clinical cases. During the assessment, the student demonstrates practical skills and interprets them, analyses the integrity of these indices, applies treatment method, and predicts the course of disease. The Mini Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) principle of formative assessment is applied. At the end of academic year, the final verification takes place during which acquired practical skills, specified in the outcomes of subject study, are evaluated.

Day One Competences obtained during extra-mural practice (6th study year) are specified in the “Procedure of Clinical Practice of the Student in the Study programme of VM” and its annexes. During the practical training, the students perform self-evaluation indicating evaluation of the obtained competences, amount of practical manipulations and self-support level of their performance. All patients and acquired competences are registered in the individual Practice Logbook. The supervisor on a weekly basis assesses the obtained competences. At the end of the practice, the supervisor assesses the outcomes of the practical training in scores. This assessment is a constituent part of overall assessment of practice.

Following completion of practical training, the students prepare written report and submit it together with the Practice Logbook to practice Coordinator. Students are assessed by the Practice Assessment Commission.

10.2. The newly purchased equipment important for development of clinical skills is provided in Annex 9.

10.3. The new Veterinary Medicine Simulation Centre was established in 2018 for the more effective development of practical skills. It is located in newly renovated building and enables continuous training of practical skills in veterinary medicine by using veterinary medical simulation methods. The Centre is a student-centered space where students are able to practice in a safe, stress-free, self-guided learning environment without any risk of harming animals. Students can tailor their learning needs to address specific skill deficiencies and can arrange their own individual practical session schedule according to their personal needs. The Centre working hours are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., students can check online the available places and book it by email vetsim@lsmuni.lt.

10.4. Vivarium (416 m²) for laboratory animal housing and breeding was reconstructed in 2015, were a quiet, safe and secure environment is provided for the animals. There are modern up to date cages, keeping rooms, teaching class and training laboratory.

11. The team strongly suggests to allocate a major part of the new building for Experimental animals to host the Small Animal Clinic

11.1. The former building for Experimental animals (presently Biological Research Centre of LSMU) is a structural unit of the LSMU. There was a discussion with the administration of LSMU regarding modification of the Biological Research Centre for the needs of the Faculty. However, due to the existing commitments it was not possible to change its mission. However, development of Small Animal Clinic is one of the LSMU strategic development priorities for 2017-2021. By decision of University Council No.UT-1-24-4, 2018-08-31, four millions Euros of University funds were allocated for development of the new Animal Clinic facilities and equipment. For implementation of Animal Clinic development plan, the University is actively seeking to attract external funding resources. In June 2018 an investment project “Development of LSMU VA FVM Small Animal Clinic infrastructure necessary for implementation of the study programme Veterinary Medicine” was prepared and submitted to Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Lithuania. It is planned that the Small Animal Clinic will be constructed at a walking distance of 20 min from the VA campus. In the Annex 10 there is a certificate from Real property register of the State Enterprise Centre of Registers indicating that a three hectares plot of land formed. It is planned that the new Small Animal Clinic is due to be finished in 2023.

III. OTHER IMPLEMENTED MEASURES TO IMPROVE PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND WORK SAFETY

12.1. Occupational Safety and Health Service is responsible for safety of the staff, students and guests. This Service develops annual plans for examination of health state of staff. The examination is free of charge.

The occupational safety is regulated by LSMU Rector’s order prepared following the Lithuanian Law on Safety and Health at Work and general rules of fire prevention and safety. Heads of structural units of the University (Faculty) are responsible for familiarization of staff members with the rules and signing in journals. The journals are kept at each unit.

12.2. In the FVM facilities, where hazardous materials are used, there are eye showers marked with special signs and the staff is trained how to use it in emergency cases. All buildings have emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and first aid kits.

12.3. Every 3 years Occupational Safety and Health Service organise compulsory fire safety training for all FVM personnel. The training is made mandatory through the Rectors’ order. The last training was done in December 2018.

12.4. LSMU Civil Protection Service is responsible for control of extreme situations if any. This Service is responsible for checking of dosimeters of relevant staff every three months.

12.5. In 2016 student leisure zone was opened to make more attractive and student friendly atmosphere and environment at the Veterinary Academy.

12.6. Responding to increasing demand for onsite food demand, in the Learning block of laboratories No 5 a café was opened for students and employees in 2018. Additionally, there are at least 5 food catering places ranging from take away to more sophisticated canteens within 5-10 min. walking distance from the VA campus.

IV. ESEVT INDICATORS

Factual information based on the last three years is provided in Annexes 11 and 12.

V. LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1. ECOVE decision_2015.

Annex 2. LSMU Rector's order establishing Committee on Biosecurity and Biosafety.

Annex 3. Biosecurity and biosafety Standard Operating Procedures at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Academy, Lithuanian University of Health Sciences.

Annex 4. Elevator at the Small Animal Clinic.

Annex 5. Isolation unit of the Small Animal Clinic.

Annex 6. Isolation Unit of the Large Animals Clinic.

Annex 7. Footwear disinfection equipment and laundry facilities.

Annex 8. Logbook.

Annex 9. The new equipment at the Clinics of Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

Annex 10. Copy of certificate from Real property register of the State Enterprise Centre.

Annex 11. ESEVT indicators (1).

Annex 12. ESEVT indicators (2).